

# 2024 ECONOMIC REPORT

## WEST CENTRAL REGION



The West Central Region is comprised of 13 counties in the west central part of Missouri. This region is home to cities including Warrensburg, Sedalia, Lexington, Clinton, and Nevada.

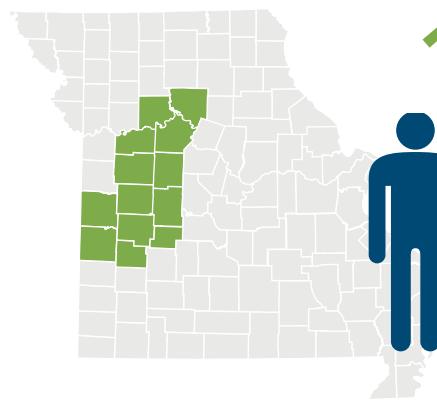
The West Central Region workforce has more than 122,100 employees in 2023, making up 4.1 percent of Missouri's employment. In 2023, 52.6 percent of the workforce was female and 47.4 percent was male, while the Missouri average was 50.7 percent females and 49.3 percent male workers in the workforce. The regional average unemployment rate for 2023 was 3.2 percent, compared to 3.0 percent for Missouri and 3.6 percent for the nation.

The workforce is getting older in the West Central Region, a trend continuing throughout Missouri and the U.S. In 2022, 25.1 percent of the workforce was age 55 or older, up from 22 percent a decade earlier. It was 23.6 percent for Missouri and 24.0 percent for the nation.

For the region, 8.3 percent of the workforce was non-white and 5.7 percent was Hispanic or Latino. This compares to the state averages of 17.5 percent non-white and 4.8 percent Hispanic or Latino.

In the West Central Region, 5.6 percent of the population (ages 18 to 64) speaks a language other than English at home. By comparison, Missouri was at 7.0 percent and the U.S. was at 23.5 percent.

The West Central Region has a higher percentage of the population with a disability compared to the state and the nation. For the West Central Region, 15.8 percent of the population had a disability compared to 12.3 percent in Missouri and 10.5 percent in the U.S.



**122,100  
EMPLOYEES  
4.1%  
OF MISSOURI'S  
EMPLOYMENT**

### Workforce Demographics

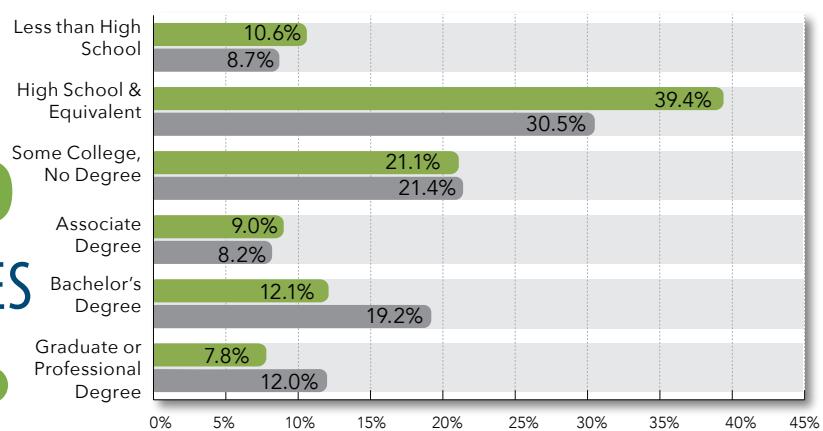
	West Central Region	Missouri	United States
Average Monthly Employment in 2023	122,183	2,993,587	161,037,000
Average Unemployment Rate in 2023	3.2%	3.0%	3.6%
Male	47.4%	49.3%	51.3%
Female	52.6%	50.7%	48.7%
Non-White	8.3%	17.5%	24.6%
Hispanic or Latino	5.7%	4.8%	17.7%
Ages 55 and Older	25.1%	23.6%	24.0%
With Disabilities (Ages 18-64)	15.8%	12.3%	10.5%
Below Poverty Levels (Ages 18-64)	14.7%	12.3%	11.7%
Language other than English (Ages 18-64)	5.6%	7.0%	23.5%
Education of Associate Degree or Higher (25 years & Older)	28.9%	39.4%	43.1%
Veterans (Age 18-64)	6.7%	4.7%	4.3%

SOURCES: QWI 2023 Q2; PRIVATE OWNERSHIP. CENSUS 2022 ACS 5 YEARS DATA, LAUS 2023 DATA

Educational attainment rates for the West Central Region are lower than those of the state for bachelor's or advanced degrees. Twenty-nine percent of the region's population age 25 and older has an associate, bachelor's, or advanced degree compared to 39 percent for the state, and 43 percent for the nation. About 10.6 percent of the region's population of age 25 and older has less than high school education.

### Educational Attainment

West Central Region    Missouri

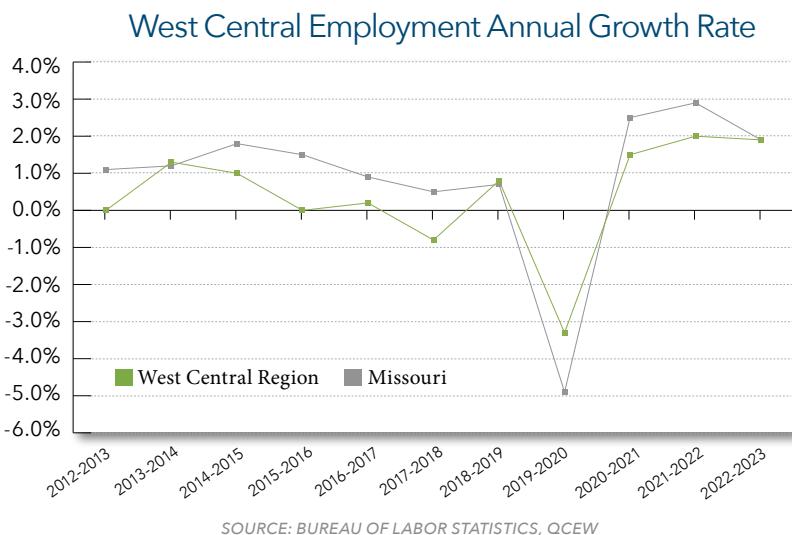


SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, ACS 2022, 5 YEAR ESTIMATES

# WEST CENTRAL REGION

## INDUSTRY ANALYSIS

The West Central Region averaged over 85,500 jobs in 2023. The region gained 2,964 jobs from 2019 to 2023 and increased 1.9 percent from 2022 to 2023. Missouri employment increased by 1.9 percent in 2023. From 2019 to 2023, the West Central Region averaged 0.7 percent compound annual growth for an overall gain of 3.6 percent. During that same period (2019-2023), Missouri's compound annual employment gain was 0.5 percent for an overall gain of 2.4 percent.



The *Health Care and Social Assistance* industry is the largest employing industry in the region with over 16,500 jobs. *Manufacturing* and *Retail Trade* are the next largest industries in the area, with over 13,200 and 11,000 jobs in 2023, respectively.

*Retail Trade; Manufacturing; Health Care and Social Assistance; Accommodation and Food Services; Educational Services; Construction; and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services* had employment gains from 2019 to 2023.

## West Central Region Top Employing Industries

	Employment 2019	Employment 2023	Net Change	2019- 2023 CAGR	2022 Annual Wages
<b>Health Care and Social Assistance</b>	16,100	16,504	404	0.5%	\$47,088
<b>Manufacturing</b>	12,363	13,261	898	1.4%	\$56,292
<b>Retail Trade</b>	9,997	11,017	1,020	2.0%	\$35,412
<b>Educational Services</b>	9,238	9,479	241	0.5%	\$38,604
<b>Accommodation and Food Services</b>	6,859	7,105	246	0.7%	\$19,536
<b>Construction</b>	3,910	4,130	220	1.1%	\$51,456
<b>Public Administration</b>	4,069	3,991	-78	-0.4%	\$32,592
<b>Wholesale Trade</b>	3,145	3,067	-78	-0.5%	\$62,916
<b>Finance and Insurance</b>	2,523	2,282	-241	-2.0%	\$62,532
<b>Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services</b>	2,446	2,281	-165	-1.4%	\$44,364
<b>Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services</b>	1,939	2,136	197	2.0%	\$69,252
<b>Other Services (except Public Administration)</b>	2,193	2,129	-64	-0.6%	\$36,132

SOURCES: LEHD QWI, 2019-2023 QUARTER 3 DATA, LEHD QWI 2022 ANNUAL AVERAGE FOR WAGE.  
ALL OWNERSHIP

## LOCATION QUOTIENT

To understand the major industries within a region, an analysis of industry concentration or clustering can be useful. The Location Quotient (LQ) describes the concentration of an industry in a geographic region, in relation to the nation, with 1.0 being the national average. Industries with higher than 1.0 LQ indicate a concentration.

The West Central Region has higher concentrations in *Gasoline Stations and Fuel Dealers; Animal Production and Aquaculture; Food Manufacturing; Primary Metal Manufacturing; Machinery Manufacturing; and Crop Production*.



HIGHEST 2023  
LQ 3.3

## GASOLINE STATIONS AND FUEL DEALERS

### 2023 West Central Region Location Quotients

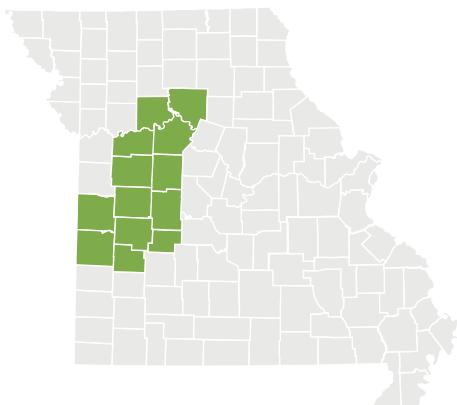
Industry	Employment	Location Quotient
<b>Gasoline Stations and Fuel Dealers</b>	1,907	3.3
<b>Animal Production and Aquaculture</b>	417	2.8
<b>Food Manufacturing</b>	2,274	2.3
<b>Primary Metal Manufacturing</b>	472	2.3
<b>Machinery Manufacturing</b>	1,409	2.2
<b>Crop Production</b>	653	2.1
<b>Nursing and Residential Care Facilities</b>	3,553	2.0
<b>Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing</b>	1,622	2.0
<b>Support Activities for Agriculture and Forestry</b>	336	1.6
<b>Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers</b>	1,695	1.5
<b>General Merchandise Retailers</b>	2,678	1.5
<b>Goods-Producing</b>	18,196	1.4
<b>Building Material and Garden Equipment and Supplies Dealers</b>	1,057	1.3
<b>Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods</b>	1,611	1.3
<b>Social Assistance</b>	3,008	1.2

SOURCE: U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS, QUARTERLY CENSUS OF EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES, 2023

# WEST CENTRAL REGION

Projected growth in industry helps to identify future employment needs for an area.

Projections indicate that the largest industry growth in the West Central Region from 2022-2032 will be in the *General Merchandise Retailers; Ambulatory Health Care Services; Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods; Total Self Employed and Unpaid Family Workers, All Jobs; and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services*.



## West Central Largest Growth Industries 2022-2032

	Employment 2022	Employment 2032	Change 2022-2032 Numeric	Change 2022-2032 Percent
<b>General Merchandise Retailers</b>	2,961	3,432	<b>471</b>	15.9%
<b>Ambulatory Health Care Services</b>	2,350	2,757	<b>407</b>	17.3%
<b>Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods</b>	1,790	2,092	<b>302</b>	16.9%
<b>Total Self Employed and Unpaid Family Workers, All Jobs</b>	5,227	5,501	<b>274</b>	5.2%
<b>Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services</b>	1,823	2,029	<b>206</b>	11.3%
<b>Local Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals</b>	5,266	5,472	<b>206</b>	3.9%
<b>Construction of Buildings</b>	730	855	<b>125</b>	17.1%
<b>Machinery Manufacturing</b>	1,566	1,666	<b>100</b>	6.4%
<b>Nursing and Residential Care Facilities</b>	3,657	3,751	<b>94</b>	2.6%
<b>Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers</b>	1,682	1,767	<b>85</b>	5.1%

SOURCE: MERIC INDUSTRY PROJECTIONS, 2022-2032

## PROJECTED GROWTH BY INDUSTRY HELPS TO IDENTIFY FUTURE EMPLOYMENT NEEDS FOR AN AREA.

## OCUPATIONS PROJECTIONS

MERIC produces occupational projections that estimates labor demand over a 10-year period. The current projections cycle projected industry and occupation employment from 2022-2032.

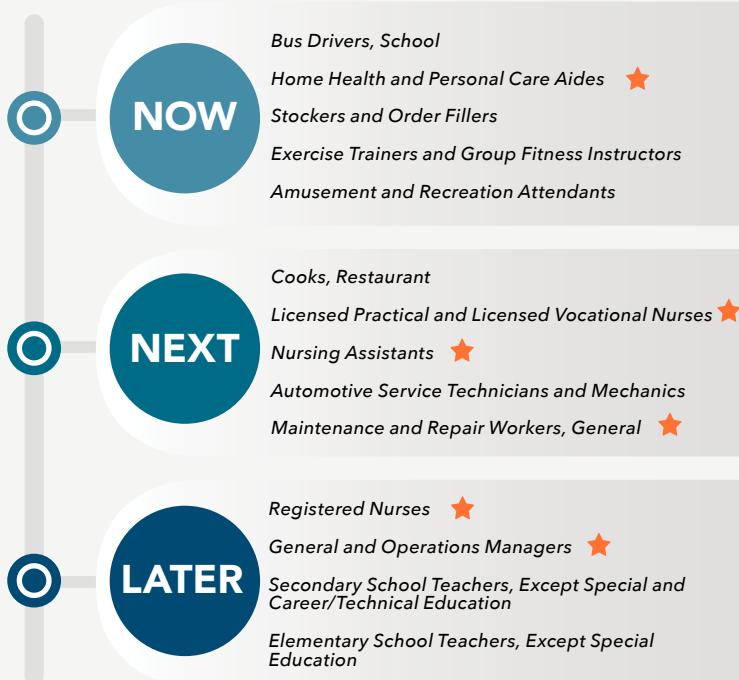
MERIC categorizes these occupations using its Now-Next-Later method to help job seekers understand the training, education, and experience requirements for various occupations.

**NOW** jobs typically require short-term on-the-job training, little to no experience, and/or a high school diploma. **NOW** occupations with the most projected openings are *Cashiers; Home Health and Personal Care Aides; and Stockers and Order Fillers. Bus Drivers, School; Home Health and Personal Care Aides; and Stockers and Order Fillers* are projected to be the fastest growing Now occupations over the next decade.

**NEXT** jobs typically require a non-degree certificate, associate degree, apprenticeship, some experience, or moderate- to long-term training. *Nursing Assistants; Cooks, Restaurant; and Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers* are projected to have the most openings for the **Next** category of occupations. *Cooks, Restaurant; Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses; and Nursing Assistants* are the fastest growing Next occupations.

**LATER** jobs typically require a bachelor's degree or higher. For **Later** occupations, *General and Operations Managers; Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education; and Registered Nurses* are projected to have the most openings. *Registered Nurses; General and Operations Managers; and Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education* are the fastest growing Later occupations.

## West Central Region Fastest Growing Occupations



SOURCE: MERIC OCCUPATIONAL PROJECTIONS, 2022-2032

NOTE: OCCUPATIONS WITH ANNUAL TOTAL OPENINGS OF LESS THAN 50 ARE OMITTED

★ DENOTES OCCUPATIONS IN THE TOP TEN ONLINE JOB ADS FOR MAY 2023- APRIL 2024 IN THE REGION AND WITHIN THE NOW-NEXT-LATER CLASSIFICATION

# WEST CENTRAL REGION

## WEST CENTRAL REGION LONG-TERM OCCUPATIONAL PROJECTIONS BY TOP OPENINGS

OCCUPATION TITLE	2022 Estimated Employment	2032 Projected Employment	Annual Growth Openings	Annual Exits	Annual Transfers	Annual Total Openings	Median Wages
<b>NOW OCCUPATIONS</b>							
Cashiers	3,133	2,788	-34	285	287	<b>538</b>	\$27,285
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	2,851	3,381	53	249	208	<b>510</b>	\$28,282
Stockers and Order Fillers	1,750	2,027	28	118	185	<b>331</b>	\$33,217
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	1,608	1,643	4	78	132	<b>214</b>	\$34,088
Fast Food and Counter Workers	928	937	1	103	110	<b>214</b>	\$27,343
<b>NEXT OCCUPATIONS</b>							
Nursing Assistants	1,437	1,538	10	94	116	<b>220</b>	\$32,828
Cooks, Restaurant	891	1,066	18	67	80	<b>165</b>	\$29,913
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	1,384	1,412	3	63	82	<b>148</b>	\$47,223
Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary	1,005	1,007	0	57	60	<b>117</b>	\$29,518
Miscellaneous Assemblers and Fabricators	1,098	1,046	-5	46	68	<b>109</b>	\$35,320
<b>LATER OCCUPATIONS</b>							
General and Operations Managers	2,634	2,733	10	67	144	<b>221</b>	\$61,328
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	1,749	1,767	2	59	58	<b>119</b>	\$46,375
Registered Nurses	1,574	1,759	18	55	34	<b>107</b>	\$71,889
Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	1,020	1,033	1	30	33	<b>64</b>	\$49,304
Accountants and Auditors	493	515	2	16	23	<b>41</b>	\$58,807

SOURCE: MERIC OCCUPATIONAL PROJECTIONS, 2022-2032

★ DENOTES OCCUPATIONS IN THE TOP TEN ONLINE JOB ADS FOR MAY 2023- APRIL 2024 IN THE REGION AND WITHIN THE NOW-NEXT-LATER CLASSIFICATION

## ONLINE JOB POSTINGS

Job postings are an indicator of demand and opportunities in an area and can assist individuals seeking job opportunities in current in-demand occupations. According to information based on online job posting data collected and aggregated from May 1, 2023 to April 30, 2024 by Lightcast™ for the Central Region, jobs like *Registered Nurses; Retail Salespersons; Home Health & Personal Care Aides; and Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses* had a high number of job postings in the region.

OCCUPATION TITLE	ONLINE JOB POSTINGS
<b>NOW OCCUPATIONS</b>	
Retail Salespersons	520
Home Health & Personal Care Aides	510
Fast Food & Counter Workers	260
Laborers & Freight, Stock, & Material Movers, Hand	220
Customer Service Representatives	170
<b>NEXT OCCUPATIONS</b>	
Licensed Practical & Licensed Vocational Nurses	440
Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	420
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	410
Merchandise Displayers & Window Trimmers	270
Food Service Managers	260
<b>LATER OCCUPATIONS</b>	
Registered Nurses	890
Physical Therapists	210
General & Operations Managers	170
Medical & Health Services Managers	140
Postsecondary Teachers	120

SOURCE: LIGHTCAST™, ONLINE JOB ADS FROM MAY 1, 2023 - APRIL 30, 2024